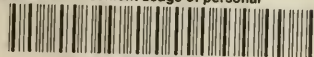


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LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
USAGE OF
PERSONAL COMPUTERS
IN MONTANA
1992

by
Bob Liffing
Director, Montana Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center

APRIL 1992

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LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT USAGE OF PERSONAL COMPUTERS IN MONTANA 1992

INTRODUCTION

A questionnaire about the use of personal computers was sent to all Sheriffs and Police Chiefs in Montana in March 1992. The objective of this survey was to find out which agencies had PC's, what their capabilities were, what kind of training was desired, and how were the PC's being used.

Of the 115 questionnaires which were sent out, 74 were completed and returned, for a response rate of 64%.

OVERVIEW

Forty one of the agencies who returned the questionnaire indicated that they had and were using personal computers in their operations. Thirty-three indicated that they had no computer capability at this time.

TABLE 1
Number of Local Law Enforcement Agencies in Montana
Using Personal Computers in 1992

Number of Personal Computers	Number of Agencies	Percentage of Total	Percentage of those Responding
1	24	21%	32%
2 or More	17	15%	23%
No Computers	33	29%	45%
Not Responding to Questionnaire	41	36%	---

The overwhelming majority of PC's found in local law enforcement agencies in Montana are IBM Compatibles. Although not asked in the questionnaire, several agencies indicated the size and speed of their computers. Eight agencies had computers using 386 microprocessors and five, the older and slower 286 microprocessors.

Most agencies use a version of DOS as their operating system. Almost all have of these machines have hard drives although the capacity ranges from 20 megabytes to 300 megabytes.

About half of the Agencies had the capability to use both 5 1/4" and 3 1/2" Discs. Fourteen agencies had only the capability to use 5 1/4" discs, while only three could use only 3 1/2" ones.

SOFTWARE CAPABILITIES

Table 2 shows the general areas in which personal computers are used by law enforcement agencies in Montana. All agencies having personal computers use them for word processing. WordPerfect is the most common software package being used.

Eighty percent of the agencies indicated that they have a data base capability. dBASE and R:Base are the most common packages being used. Over half of the agencies also have a spread sheet capability. Lotus and Quatro Pro being the most commonly used packages.

To a lesser extent, other software is also being used in these agencies--record management packages (37%), graphics (22%) being the most common. Statistical packages (7%), desktop publishing (5%), and personnel management software (2%) are found in only a few agencies.

TABLE 2
The Number of Agencies
Having Software Packages
for
Selected Functions

Capability	Number Having	Most Common Software
Word Processing	41	WordPerfect (93%)
Data Base Mgmt	33	dBASE (41%) R:Base (44%)
Spreadsheet	23	Lotus (48%) Quatro Pro (26%)
DeskTop Publishing	2	
Statistical Packages	3	
Graphics	9	Lotus (33%) DrawPerfect (22%) Harvard Graphics (22%)
Records Mgmt System	15	CRIS (21%) Custom Programs (21%) Lockdown (21%)
Personnel Mgmt	1	
Networking	11	Novell (73%)

Eleven (27%) of the agencies have their computers on a network where the computers are linked to each other. Novell software is the most common found.

Training programs in data base management (63%) and the use of spread sheets (61%) were requested more frequently than those dealing with word processing (48%). Training in records management (44%), statistics (44%), and graphics (39%) were also commonly asked for.

Not having the capability in a specific area did not stop agencies from expressing interest in training in that area. For records management, statistics, and graphics this means that only a general introduction to the functions should be used. For word processing, data base management, and spread sheet analysis the training could be package specific.

SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS

About half the the agencies (20) with personal computers use them to process arrest and crime records, which is the most common use. The MUCR/NIBRS program is the second most frequent application (18) followed by a Master Name Index (17) of one kind or another. PC's are also commonly used in tracking and managing Traffic Citations (15), Warrants and Summons (15), and Notices to Appear (13).

Among those not currently using a specific application, interest was expressed in all of the applications listed in the questionnaire. The application most frequently marked for future potential were Intelligence (18), Personnel Management ((18), Evidence and Stolen Property Management (17), Crime Analysis (15), and Arrest/Crime Records (14).

TABLE 3
The Number of Agencies
Desiring Computer Training
in
Selected Computer Areas

Capability	<u>Number of Agencies</u>		Total Agencies
	Having Software	Not Having Software	
Word Processing	20	0	20
Data Base Mgmt	22	4	26
Spreadsheet	18	7	25
DeskTop Publishing	2	9	11
Statistical Packages	1	17	18
Graphics	4	11	15
Records Mgmt System	7	11	18
Personnel Mgmt	0	15	15
Networking	2	13	15

TABLE 4
Number of Agencies Using Personal Computers
For Specific Applications
and
The Number of Agencies Interested in These
Applications.

	Use Now	Would Like To Use
Arrest/Crime Records	20	14
Crime Analysis	10	15
Field Interrogation	7	9
Fleet Management	8	9
Intelligence	10	18
Missing Persons	3	5
Pawned Articles	8	8
Evidence/Stolen		
Property Management	10	17
Traffic/Parking		
Citations	15	9
Officer Training	11	11
MUCR/NIBRS	18	10
Warrant/Summons	15	13
Workload Analysis	4	10
Management of Agency		
Owned Property	9	12
Traffic Accident		
Analysis	2	12
Master Name Index	17	12
Notices to Appear	13	12
Scheduling	9	15
Personnel Management	2	18

